

# The value of supported housing to homelessness prevention, health and wellbeing

The supported housing sector delivers high quality services that offer value for money and can achieve positive, life-changing outcomes for the people that it supports. The National Housing Federation and our members commissioned Imogen Blood & Associates, in partnership with the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York, to carry out research into the impact that supported housing has on health and wellbeing outcomes and homelessness prevention. **The research found that:**

- Good quality supported housing has a significant positive impact on its residents' health, wellbeing and sense of social connection.
- Supported housing plays a critical role in reducing homelessness and relieving pressures on the social care, health, criminal justice and housing sectors - ultimately lessening demands on the public purse.
- Short-term and transitional supported housing plays a key role in reducing and/or preventing higher risk forms of homelessness, such as rough sleeping.
- Supported housing residents have complex needs: 9 out of 10 have at least one health condition or disability, and half of them are experiencing more than one of these conditions.
- One of the biggest challenges facing supported housing is the reduction in funding over time.
- The ability to move people on from supported housing into independent tenancies is limited by a lack of affordable and suitable housing.
- There is a clear need to ring-fence and increase long-term revenue funding for housing-related support to local authorities.

# 41,000

Around 41,000 more people would be experiencing homelessness in England if supported housing did not exist.

# Our key recommendations

## The government should:

- Ring-fence and increase long-term revenue funding for housing-related support to ensure spending at least matches the £1.6bn per year allocated to local authorities in England in 2010, and encourage councils to commit to long-term funding plans.
- Invest in social housing to improve the short-term supported housing sector's ability to move people to affordable and suitable independent tenancies.
- Support effective partnership working between supported housing, the NHS and social care through greater security of funding.
- Foster better coordination between criminal justice services and supported housing.
- Gather better data about the profile and needs of people living in supported housing and the positive impact this has on their health and wellbeing, and on the public purse.

**£300m**

Allocate the £300m DHSC Strategic Housing Fund so that supported housing can continue to support the NHS and social care services.

## Integrated Care Systems (ICS) should:

- Foster better strategic integration of supported housing in wider systems at a place-based level and create a supported housing lead within each ICS.
- Create an infrastructure of specialist health, mental health and addiction services that would enable supported housing to work more successfully with people with multiple and complex needs.
- Increase resources to NHS mental health teams to encourage effective partnership working with supported housing for people with mental health needs.

## There is also a role for supported housing providers.

### They should:

- Work in partnership with local authorities to help plan supported housing to meet local need.
- Work with local authorities to help plan general needs housing for move-on from supported housing.
- Take an active part in local ICS systems to help the NHS understand the role of supported housing in improving health outcomes.
- Work jointly with specialist health, mental health, addiction and criminal justice services to enhance the support to residents in supported housing linked to these specialisms.
- Provide data on resident need to aid the development of local plans and underpin partnership working.